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PATENT APPLICATION

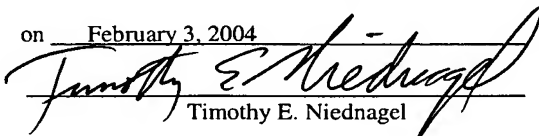
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 3673
Atty. Docket: 8266-0685
Applicant: Weismiller et al.
Title: HOSPITAL BED
Serial No.: 10/028,833
Filed: December 20, 2001
Examiner: Trettel, M.

Certificate Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8(a)

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on February 3, 2004


Timothy E. Niednagel

Dated: February 3, 2004

APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief
Commissioner for Patents
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Dear Sir:

This Appeal Brief is submitted in triplicate and in furtherance of the Notice of Appeal filed December 3, 2003. A Final Rejection (hereinafter "the Final Rejection") was issued September 3, 2003 and the Notice of Appeal was filed on December 3, 2003. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.192, an Appendix containing a copy of the claims involved in the appeal is attached. Applicants have also enclosed a check in the amount of \$330.00 which is intended to satisfy the 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c) Appeal Brief filing fee.

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Real Party in Interest

The above-referenced application has been assigned to Hill-Rom Services, Inc., which is a Delaware corporation headquartered in Batesville, Indiana.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

Status of Claims

Claims 27, 29-47, and 58-70 are pending in the above-identified application and are attached hereto as Appendix A.

Claims 38 and 65-69 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,175,897 to Marra, Jr. (hereinafter "Marra") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,542,138 to Williams et al. (hereinafter "Williams").

Claims 38, 40-44, 65, 68, and 69 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,612,679 to Mitchell ("Mitchell") in view of Williams.

Claims 27, 29-37, 39, 45-47, 58-64, and 70 have been allowed.

Accordingly, claims 38, 40-44, and 65-69 are on appeal.

Status of Amendments

An Amendment filed subsequent to the Final Rejection on September 3, 2003 ("the Final Response") was entered into this Appeal in the Advisory Action.

Summary of the Invention

The following is a concise explanation of the invention defined in the claims involved in this appeal. However, the citations in the following summary should not be construed as the only locations of support in the application for the claims involved in this appeal. Further, the following should not be construed to limit the claims involved in this appeal or any other patentable feature of the present disclosure.

With regard to independent claim 38, the bed includes a frame, a deck supported by the frame, a patient support surface supported by the deck, and a siderail (812) coupled to one of the frame and the deck where siderail (812) is configured to move between a raised position (as shown in Fig. 34) in which at least a portion of siderail (812) extends above patient support surface (552) and a lowered position (such as that shown in Fig. 35 in outline

form) in which siderail (812) is positioned below patient support surface (552). The bed also includes a display screen (964) which is coupled to siderail (812) and a processor in communication with display screen (964) wherein the processor is configured to provide variable graphical information to display screen (964).

Issues

I. Are claims 38 and 65-69 unpatentable over Marra in view of Williams under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)?

II. Are claims 38, 40-44, 65, 68, and 69 unpatentable over Mitchell in view of Williams under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)?

Grouping of Claims

Claims 38, 40-44, and 65-69 are believed to be separately patentable. However, for the purposes of this appeal, claims 38, 41 and 68 are grouped together, and the remaining claims are grouped separately.

Arguments

1. Claims 38 and 68 are patentable over the combination of Marra and Williams

Regarding independent claim 38, in the Final Rejection, the Examiner asserts that Marra discloses everything recited in claim 38, except “the control panels lack the claimed processor that provide[s] variable graphical information to a display screen for controls.” The Examiner further stated that Williams discloses this element in the form of a control module (40) which includes a microprocessor (82). According to the Examiner, “it would have been obvious to a skilled artisan to have upgraded the controls of the Marra bed siderail structure with a microprocessor control that includes a display screen that provide[s] variable graphical information as taught by Williams et al. The motivation would have been to provide the benefits of a programmable control unit for the bed, which in the control unit is essentially a microcomputer that is easily operated and controlled by a user.”

Pending claim 38 is reproduced below with parenthetical references to items disclosed in Marra and Williams identified by the Examiner as corresponding to claim limitations:

38. A bed comprising:

a frame;

a deck supported by the frame;

a patient support surface supported by the deck;

a siderail (**bed rail 14, 16 in Marra**) coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail being configured to move between a raised position in which at least a portion of the siderail extends above the patient support surface and a lowered position in which the siderail is positioned below the patient support surface;

a display screen (**housings 32, 34 in Marra**) coupled to the siderail, and

a processor (**processor 82 in Williams**) in communication with the display screen (**display 70 in Williams**), the processor being configured to provide variable graphical information to the display screen.

The Examiner has improperly rejected independent claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) using a combination of Marra and Williams. As discussed above, the Examiner admits that Marra does not disclose or suggest a control panel that provides variable graphical information as claimed in claim 38. In Marra, the housings 32, 34 only accommodate bed control buttons, and not a "display screen" as claimed in claim 38. The combination of Marra and Williams is improper because there is a complete lack of any motivation to combine the references and because Williams specifically teaches away from providing a bed controller on or in a bed siderail.

"One inherent problem with current side rail controls or pendant speaker systems is that confused or challenged patients have a great deal of difficulty locating and manipulating the controls. For example, pendant speaker systems are not mounted in a fixed location and can be lost in the bed clothes. In the case of side rail controls, they are frequently mounted in locations which are not convenient or conducive to their use.

Another disadvantage of side-rail controls and pendant speaker systems is that they are generally accessible to the patient only when the patient is in the hospital bed. After surgery or other treatment, it is generally desirable to ambulate the patient as soon as is medically practicable. Studies show that ambulating patients as quickly as possible after surgical procedures decreases the patient's recovery time and also the overnight stays required. Patients are therefore encouraged to sit upright

in a bedside chair in the patient's hospital room rather than remain confined in the hospital bed. Current pendant systems and side rail controllers are frequently inaccessible to the patient once the patient is out of the hospital bed.

Current side rail control systems are also inaccessible to the visiting family member who might be staying with the patient during recovery. The existing T.V. controls and other environmental controls are not accessible to the visitor when they are fixed to the bed side rail." (See Williams, col. 1, lines 20-45) (emphasis added).

For the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to "establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (M.P.E.P.) Section 2143.

It is well known that when combining the content of various references "there must be some teaching, suggestion or motivation in the prior art to make the specific combination that was made by the applicant." *In re Dance*, 48 USPQ2d 1635, 1637 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Raynes*, 28 USPQ2d 1630, 1631 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Oetiker*, 24 USPQ2d 1443, 1445 (Fed. Cir. 1992). "The mere fact that the prior art could be so modified would not have made the modification obvious unless the prior art suggested the desirability of the modification." *In re Gordon*, 221 USPQ 1125, 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

Moreover, the Patent and Trademark Office can satisfy its burden of establishing obviousness "only by showing some *objective* teaching in the prior art or that knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art would lead an individual to combine the relevant teachings of the references." *In re Fine*, 1837 F.2d 1071, 1073, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (emphasis added) (citations omitted). The Federal Circuit in *In re Fine* stated that a "bald assertion" of substituting an element in a prior art reference would have been within the ordinary skill in the art is insufficient to support a finding of obviousness." *Id.* at 1074.

The Federal Circuit has emphasized the requirement that the prior art must suggest the modifications necessary to achieve the claimed invention. The "mere possibility" that a prior art reference could be modified such that its use would lead to the particular result recited in a claim does not make that recited in the claim obvious "unless the prior art

suggested the desirability of such a modification.” *In re Ochia*, 71 F.3d 1565, 1570, 37 USPQ2d 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1995). “Obviousness cannot be established by hindsight combination to produce the claimed invention.” *In re Dance*, 48 USPQ2d at 1637; *In re Gorman*, 18 USPQ2d 1885, 1888 (Fed. Cir. 1991). “Combining prior art references without evidence of such a suggestion, teaching, or motivation simply takes the inventor’s disclosure as a blueprint for piecing together the prior art to defeat patentability--the essence of hindsight.” *In re Dembiczak*, 50 USPQ2d at 1617; *Feil*, 227 USPQ at 547 (Fed. Cir. 1985). The prior art reference must be considered in its entirety, i.e., as a whole, including portions that would lead away from the claimed invention. *W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 220 USPQ 303 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *M.P.E.P.* § 2141.02.

The Examiner cannot combine the microprocessor and display of Williams with the siderail controls of Marra because Williams specifically teaches away from using siderail bed controls. There is a complete lack of motivation to combine the references. One of ordinary skill in the art would certainly not be compelled to combine Williams with Marra in view of Williams teaching away from such combination.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 38 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Marra and Williams. Claim 68 depends from properly allowable claim 38. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner’s rejection of claims 38 and 68.

2. Claim 65 is patentable over the combination of Marra and Williams

Claim 65 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations that the variable graphical information includes at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Marra or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Marra and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Marra and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 65. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 65 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 65 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Marra and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner’s rejection of claim 65.

3. Claim 66 is patentable over the combination of Marra and Williams

Claim 66 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations of a communication network having a plurality of module connection points, a first module connection point of the network, and a control circuit coupled to the network and to the controller, the control circuit including means for transmitting control signals over the network, a memory coupled to the control circuit for storing predetermined graphic format data for viewing on the display screen.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Marra or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Marra and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Marra and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 66. To the extent that the examiner is relying upon his own personal knowledge to support the reject of claim 66, applicants hereby request the Examiner to provide additional documentation, and affidavit or declaration of such knowledge in the Answer to permit Applicants to refute such assertions in a Reply Brief.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 66 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Marra and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 66.

4. Claim 67 is patentable over the combination of Marra and Williams

Claim 67 adds to the claimed combination of claim 66 the further limitation of a control module coupled to a second module connection point of the communication network and configured to perform a dedicated function on the bed.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Marra or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Marra and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Marra and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 67. To the extent that the examiner is relying upon his own personal knowledge to support the reject of claim 67, applicants hereby request the Examiner to provide additional documentation, and affidavit or declaration of such knowledge in the Answer to permit Applicants to refute such assertions in a Reply Brief.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 67 patentably defines the

invention over the combination of Marra and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 67.

5. Claim 69 is patentable over the combination of Marra and Williams

Claim 69 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations that the variable graphical information includes at least one of a charting format, a bar graph, an X-Y graph, a pie chart, an icon, and a picture representing a user selectable function.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Marra or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Marra and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Marra and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 69. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 69 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 69 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Marra and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 69.

6. Claims 38, 41 and 68 are patentable over the Combination of Mitchell and Williams

The Examiner has rejected the claims as being unpatentable over Mitchell in view of Williams under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Regarding independent claim 38, in the Final Rejection, the Examiner asserts that Mitchell discloses everything recited in claim 38 except "the control panels lack the claimed processor that provide[s] variable graphical information to a display screen for the controls." The Examiner then stated that "it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan to have upgraded the controls of the Mitchell bed siderail structure with a microprocessor control that includes a display screen that provide[s] variable graphical information as taught by Williams et al. The motivation would have been to provide the benefits of a programmable control unit for the bed, in which the control unit is essentially a microcomputer that is easily operated and controlled by a user." This rejection to claim 38 is substantially similar to the rejection of claim 38 using a combination of Marra and Williams, as discussed above, which was also improper.

The Examiner is again trying to improperly combine the processor and display of Williams with a siderail mounted control such as that disclosed in Mitchell. As discussed

above, the Examiner admits that Mitchell does not disclose or suggest a control panel that provides variable graphical information as claimed in claim 38. In Mitchell, the control unit 160 includes switches thereon, and is not a “display screen” as claimed in claim 38. As discussed above, there is no motivation to combine Williams with a siderail mounted controller because Williams repeatedly criticizes the use of siderail mounted controllers. One of ordinary skill in the art would clearly not have been motivated to combine Williams, which explicitly teaches away from using siderail controllers, with Mitchell, which uses a bed siderail mounted controller.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 38 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Claims 41 and 68 depend from properly allowable claim 38. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner’s rejection of claims 38, 41 and 68.

7. Claim 40 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 40 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations that the display screen is part of a pad that includes a switch panel configured to receive input from a user.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 40. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 40 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 40 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner’s rejection of claim 40.

8. Claim 42 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 42 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations that the display screen faces away from the deck.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using

impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 42. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 42 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 42 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 42.

9. Claim 43 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 43 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations of a user input, a controller in electrical communication with the user input and the display screen, and wherein the controller is configured to display the variable graphical information on the display screen.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 43. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 43 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 43 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 43.

10. Claim 44 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 44 adds to the claimed combination of claim 43 the further limitations the controller provides a menu driven list of selectable options on the display screen to permit selection of control options using the user input.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 44. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 44 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 44 patentably defines the

invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 44.

11. Claim 65 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 65 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations that the variable graphical information includes at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 65. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 65 in his Final Rejection.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 65 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 65.

12. Claim 66 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 66 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations of a communication network having a plurality of module connection points, a first module connection point of the network, and a control circuit coupled to the network and to the controller, the control circuit including means for transmitting control signals over the network, a memory coupled to the control circuit for storing predetermined graphic format data for viewing on the display screen.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 66. To the extent that the examiner is relying upon his own personal knowledge to support the reject of claim 66, applicants hereby request the Examiner to provide additional documentation, and affidavit or declaration of such knowledge in the Answer to permit Applicants to refute such assertions in a Reply Brief.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 66 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 66.

13. Claim 67 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 67 adds to the claimed combination of claim 66 the further limitation of a control module coupled to a second module connection point of the communication network and configured to perform a dedicated function on the bed.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 67. To the extent that the examiner is relying upon his own personal knowledge to support the reject of claim 67, applicants hereby request the Examiner to provide additional documentation, and affidavit or declaration of such knowledge in the Answer to permit Applicants to refute such assertions in a Reply Brief.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 67 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 67.

14. Claim 69 is patentable over the combination of Mitchell and Williams

Claim 69 adds to the claimed combination of claim 38 the further limitations that the variable graphical information includes at least one of a charting format, a bar graph, an X-Y graph, a pie chart, an icon, and a picture representing a user selectable function.

There is no disclosure or suggestion of these claimed features in Mitchell or Williams. Therefore, even if the examiner improperly combines Mitchell and Williams using impermissible hindsight, the combination of Mitchell and Williams would not produce the combination claimed in claim 69. The examiner did not address any of the limitations of claim 69 in his Final Rejection.

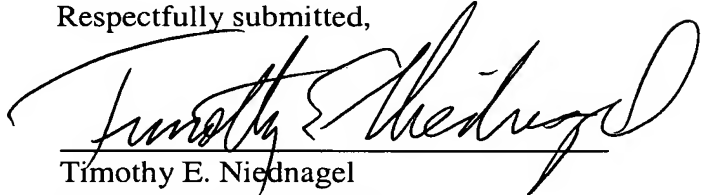
For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 69 patentably defines the invention over the combination of Mitchell and Williams. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests reversal of the Examiner's rejection of claim 69.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is clear that the Examiner's rejections are without merit. Applicants therefore request that the present rejections be reversed and a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course.

If necessary, Applicants request that this Appeal Brief be considered a request for an extension of time for a time appropriate for the response to be timely filed. Applicants request that any required fees needed beyond those submitted with this Appeal Brief be charged to the account of Bose McKinney & Evans, Deposit Account Number 02-3223.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy E. Niednagel", written over a horizontal line.

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518571_3

APPLICATION SERIAL NO. 10/028,833

APPEAL BRIEF

APPENDIX

CLAIMS AT ISSUE

27. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:
a frame,
a deck supported by the frame;
a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail including a side wall having a surface and a recess formed in the surface, and
a display screen, the display screen being coupled to the siderail and movable between a first position in which the display screen is positioned to lie in the recess and a second position in which at least a majority of the display screen is positioned to lie outside the recess, the display screen being pivotable about a pivot axis relative to the siderail as the display screen moves between the first and second positions.
29. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 27, wherein the pivot axis is horizontal.
30. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 27, wherein the pivot axis extends through the recess such that a portion of the siderail overhangs the pivot axis.
31. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:
a frame;
a deck supported by the frame;
a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail including a side wall having a surface and a recess formed in the surface;
a display screen, the display screen being coupled to the siderail and movable between a first position in which the display screen is positioned to lie in the recess and a second position in which at least a majority of the display screen is positioned to lie outside the recess, and wherein the display screen extends substantially vertically when in the first position and the display screen extends substantially horizontally when in the second position, the display screen facing upwardly when the display screen is in the second position.
32. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:
a frame;

a deck supported by the frame;

a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail including a side wall having a surface and a recess formed in the surface; and

a display screen, the display screen being coupled to the siderail and movable between a first position in which the display screen is positioned to lie in the recess and a second position in which at least a majority of the display screen is positioned to lie outside the recess, the display screen being part of a pad that includes a first end and a second end, and wherein a portion of the siderail overhangs the first end when the pad is in the first position and when the pad is in the second position

33. (Original) The bed of claim 27, wherein surface of the sidewall faces away from the deck.

34. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 27, wherein the display screen comprises a liquid crystal display configured to display graphics.

35. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 27, further comprising patient control buttons coupled to a bed side of the siderail, the patient control buttons configured for use by a person supported on the deck.

36. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:
a frame;
a deck supported by the frame;
a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail including a side wall having a surface and a recess formed in the surface;
a display screen, the display screen being coupled to the siderail and movable between a first position in which the display screen is positioned to lie in the recess and a second position in which at least a majority of the display screen is positioned to lie outside the recess; and

patient control buttons coupled to a bed side of the siderail, the patient control buttons configured for use by a person supported on the deck, the patient control buttons being angled toward a head end of the deck.

37. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:
a frame;
a deck supported by the frame;
a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail including a side wall having a surface and a recess formed in the surface;

a display screen, the display screen being coupled to the siderail and movable between a first position in which the display screen is positioned to lie in the recess and a second position in which at least a majority of the display screen is positioned to lie outside the recess; and

a switch panel coupled to the display screen and configured to receive input from a caregiver.

38. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:

a frame;

a deck supported by the frame;

a patient support surface supported by the deck;

a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail being configured to move between a raised position in which at least a portion of the siderail extends above the patient support surface and a lowered position in which the siderail is positioned below the patient support surface;

a display screen coupled to the siderail, and

a processor in communication with the display screen, the processor being configured to provide variable graphical information to the display screen.

39. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:

a frame,

a deck supported by the frame,

a patient support surface supported by the deck,

a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail being configured to move between a raised position in which at least a portion of the siderail extends above the patient support surface and a lowered position in which the siderail is positioned below the patient support surface, the siderail including a side wall having a surface and a recess formed in the surface, and

a display screen coupled to the siderail and configured to convey variable graphical information, the display screen ~~is~~ being movable between a first position in which the display screen is positioned to lie in the recess and a second position in which at least a majority of the display screen is positioned to lie outside the recess.

40. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, wherein the display screen is part of a pad that includes a switch panel configured to receive input from a user.

41. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, wherein the display screen comprises a liquid crystal display.

42. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, wherein the display screen faces away from the deck.

43. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, further comprising:
a user input;
a controller in electrical communication with the user input and the display screen; and
wherein the controller is configured to display the variable graphical information on the display screen.

44. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 43, wherein the controller provides a menu driven list of selectable options on the display screen to permit selection of control options using the user input.

45. (Previously Presented) A bed comprising:
a frame;
a deck supported by the frame;
a patient support surface supported by the deck;
a siderail coupled to one of the frame and the deck, the siderail being configured to move between a raised position in which at least a portion of the siderail extends above the patient support surface and a lowered position in which the siderail is positioned below the patient support surface; and
a display screen pivotably coupled to the siderail and configured to convey variable graphical information.

46. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 45, wherein the display screen is movable between a first substantially vertical position and a second substantially horizontal position.

47. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 45, wherein the display screen is pivotably coupled to the siderail about a pivot axis adjacent to a top end of the display screen.

58. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 27, further comprising a processor coupled to the display screen, the processor providing variable graphical information to the display screen including at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

59. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 31, wherein the display screen is configured to convey variable graphical information.

60. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 31, wherein the display screen is part of a pad that includes an input device configured to receive input from a user.

61. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 32, further comprising a processor coupled to the display screen, the processor providing variable graphical information to the display screen including at least one of at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

62. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 36, further comprising a processor coupled to the display screen, the processor providing variable graphical information to the display screen including at least one of at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

63. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 36, wherein the display screen faces away from the deck.

64. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 37, further comprising a processor coupled to the display screen, the processor providing variable graphical information to the display screen including at least one of at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

65. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, wherein the variable graphical information includes at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.

66. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, further comprising:
a communication network having a plurality of module connection points;
a first module connection point of the network; and
a control circuit coupled to the network and to the controller, the control circuit including means for transmitting control signals over the network, a memory coupled to the control circuit for storing predetermined graphic format data for viewing on the display screen.

67. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 66, further comprising a control module coupled to a second module connection point of the communication network and configured to perform a dedicated function on the bed.

68. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, further comprising memory in communication with the processor, the memory being configured to store the variable graphical information.

69. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 38, wherein the variable graphical information includes at least one of a charting format, a bar graph, an X-Y graph, a pie chart, an icon, and a picture representing a user selectable function.

70. (Previously Presented) The bed of claim 45, further comprising a processor coupled to the display screen, the processor providing variable graphical information to the display screen including at least one of at least one of a bed status, a menu of selectable bed therapies, a description of a selected therapy, a menu of control options for the selected therapy, and a record of patient information.